

NFAC 7150-80
29 October 1980


MEMORANDUM FOR: DD/NFA

SUBJECT: Call from William Strauss, Senate Subcommittee
on Investigations


1. Mr. Strauss (whom I do not know) telephoned Tuesday afternoon, 28 October, on the recommendation of Frank Lindsay (Chairman of ITEK Corporation, Chairman of the Research and Policy Committee of the Committee for Economic Development, and an old personal friend). Strauss is on the staff of Senator Charles Percy of Illinois. The Subcommittee on Investigations is contemplating some hearings in January on policy measures to cope with a major reduction in US imports of oil, for example, as a result of a complete stoppage of production in Saudi Arabia.

2. They would like one witness who was personally involved in economic and industrial mobilization in World War II to testify about the capacity of the nation to subordinate special interest concerns when faced with a genuine national crisis. Since I was employed throughout that period in the War Production Board, ending as its Program Vice-Chairman, the Committee Staff wanted to invite me to serve as that witness.

3. I told Mr. Strauss that I was in the first phase of a brand new job, and would be very reluctant to take the time to review the experience of the 1940s and to draw relevant lessons for the assumed contingency of the 1980s. I mentioned one or two other possible names, although the field is small because most of the higher officials of that era are no longer living. Strauss pressed me in any event to meet with him to give him some guidance on the kinds of measures applied during World War II for conservation and allocation of scarce materials, and also to think about additional names of potential witnesses. I agreed to meet him late on the afternoon of 4 November for that purpose, making it clear that I would continue to resist the invitation to testify myself.


Member, Senior Review Panel

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cc: 
Chief, Intelligence
Division, OLC

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